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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BRATISLAVA 000303

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SUBJECT: NEW DOUBTS ON INTEGRITY OF SLOVAK SECURITY CLEARANCE PROCESS
ARISE

REF: A) BRATISLAVA 49 B) BRATISLAVA 122 C) BRATISLAVA 142

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CLASSIFIED BY: Susan M. Ball, CDA, State.

REASON: 1.4 (b), (d)

Subject: NEW DOUBTS ON INTEGRITY OF SLOVAK SECURITY CLEARANCE
PROCESS ARISE

¶1. (C) Introduction and Summary: Following months of revelations drawn from archival files that the head of the Slovak National Security Office, Frantisek Blanarik, collaborated with the Communist-era Czechoslovak intelligence services, new information has come to light casting further doubt on the integrity of the Slovak clearance process. The recently-appointed Ambassador to Moscow and a member of the Slovak Security Council possess security clearances despite compelling evidence of their cooperation with the Czechoslovak secret services. The Slovak Government's reaction has been to ignore the documentary evidence, and, in the case of Ambassador Migas, to criticize the media for damaging his reputation and that of Slovak diplomacy. End Introduction and Summary.

¶2. (C) As reported ref a-c, Frantisek Blanarik, the head of the National Security Office, has a well-documented record of collaboration with Czechoslovak Military Intelligence. Per ref c, Charge on March 18 conveyed U.S. views on the need for strict adherence to national laws regarding the issuance of security clearances. Charge observed that the evidence presented by the media strongly suggested that Blanarik is not, according to Slovak law, eligible for a security clearance, let alone to head the agency which grants them.

¶3. (C) MFA Director General Igor Slobodnik responded that this was not an issue over which the MFA had jurisdiction, and that it would be referred to the Prime Minister's office. Post has not received any further response to the demarche. In a subsequent meeting with Blanarik (at his request) Charge reiterated that this was not about Blanarik, per se, but about the need to maintain international commitments. A member of Blanarik's staff told us that "everyone" in his generation had to report on colleagues. She also added that as soon as the press coverage subsided, the matter would be forgotten.

"Anyone Can Get a Clearance"

¶4. (C) On June 18, former Speaker of Parliament and communist party official Josef Migas was named as Slovak Ambassador to Moscow. In response to media reports detailing Migas' work with the StB as a university student in Kyiv (also drawn from archival records), the MFA spokesman protested that the media had launched a political campaign to undermine Migas and Slovak diplomacy. The statement also noted that: "Ambassador Migas, like other Slovak Ambassadors, must before leaving on assignment fulfill all of the requisite expert, security and moral criteria. According to Slovak law, the pasts of all candidates for the post of Ambassador, including possible cooperation with the former state security services, must be evaluated by several agencies which cooperate with the National Security Office. Without a valid security clearance from the NBU, the President could not have named Mr. Migas to the post of Ambassador to Moscow. "

¶5. (C) A senior Slovak diplomat who was also appointed Ambassador the same day told us that "the problem is that anyone can receive a clearance now." Indeed, that appears to be the case. Svatopluk Ratusky, a member of the Slovak National Security Council since January 2007, served during the Cold War as a member of the army unit guarding the Czechoslovak border near Bratislava. It was his job to follow, arrest and interrogate those who tried to flee to the West. Ratusky received bonuses for his service as an army intelligence official as late as October 1989. Although the organization for which he worked is not among those listed in Slovak law as automatically disqualifying for a security clearance, it is clear that, like Migas and Blanarik, Ratusky "knowingly cooperated with the security structures." According to Slovak law, evidence to that effect is disqualifying.

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¶6. (SBU) Ratusky's more recent past is troubling as well. In the mid-1990's he moved to the Slovak Secret Services, where he served in the counter-terrorism unit. Ratusky is among those accused of involvement in the 1995 kidnapping of the President Kovac's son.

Conclusion:

¶7. (C) The documentary evidence suggesting that Migas, Ratusky and Blanarik collaborated with the communist-era services is compelling. Slovak law prohibits the issuance of a security clearance to any such individual. Yet, representatives of the Slovak Government continue to state that each man fulfills the necessary criteria for a clearance. Given the sensitive and important positions each holds--head of the National Security Office, Ambassador to Moscow and member of the Slovak Security Council--we wanted to flag for Washington and for USNATO these latest revelations.
BALL